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# REVIEW

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*The World's Most Significant Thought and Action*



# MURDER IN SPAIN

• Roberto

**T**HE RESISTANCE that met the provocation spree of the bourgeois-Stalinist police under Aiguadé and Rodríguez Salas on May 3 surprised and threw into consternation the set around Companys.

It is said that on the 5th of May, Companys threatened to resign his presidency and disown publicly the bourgeois-Stalinist camarilla that waves his office as their banner, if they went through with their plan of issuing, in the name of the Generality, an official request to have men from the six French and British warships in the Barcelona harbor land in the city and "restore order."

What happened? At three in the afternoon, on May 3, Rodríguez Salas, the commissioner of public order and one of the leaders of the Stalinist P.S.U.C. suddenly surrounded the Telefónica building with some lorries full of assault guards and tried to disarm the militia of the two trade-union federations (C.N.T. and U.G.T.) who were guarding the building. Some days before Companys had issued an order dissolving the worker control patrols that were guarding the factories which the workers had taken over during the first weeks of the war. The order of the government was slighted by the C.N.T. The worker patrols continue to function at the same time as the police. In the government crisis resulting from the situation, Companys attempted to form a government, but the Syndicalist ministers he named did not even appear for the first cabinet meeting.

The Soviet Consulate and the French and British brethren must have thought up a way out. There was to be provocation at the Telephone building, annihilation of the leaders in the form of speedy individual assassinations and the restoration of order by the French and British sailors, who were to retire graciously in favor of the special troops and police that were to be rushed from Valencia. All of this was going to be pictured in the world press, in accordance with the official reports, as the righteous suppression of a Trotskyist-fascist uprising. (Indeed a certain German Stalinist-liberal weekly published in the Prague had copy on the "uprising" before it had started.) For the rest of Spain, it would have been described as an attempted revolt of the famous "Fifth column." (That is, friend Fischer's specialty.)

The planned new government of the Republic could then turn to the world, and even to Italy and Germany, saying: "Lo. The irresponsible elements are quashed. Property is safe and protected. There is place here even for the Church. No reason now for suspicions. No excuses now for continuing the war."

The worker militia guarding the Telephone building answered the assault of the bourgeois-Stalinist police with machine gun fire. The assault guards—many of whom have done similar duty under Alphonso, Zamora and the pre-rebellion Azafia—ran. In the evening Companys issued an order to disarm the worker patrols. There was an uprising to be suppressed. But to the astonishment of the government and its British, French and Soviet advisers, the workers of Barcelona rushed from the workshops to the streets, rifles in hand. From the C.N.T. building

cannon was carted out. It was obvious that the police could not complete what they began. If the British and French sailors had landed then, Barcelona would have lived through another, a bloodier, 19th of July. Having the warships bombard the city might have wrecked the entire show and destroyed for good the hold of the Valencia government on the Spanish people—especially in view of the rancor following the Malaga betrayal, and in view of the grumbling of the old-timers in the Castilian U.G.T., who are starting to suspect the domination and aims of their new Stalinist masters.

For several days the trade-union workers were dominant in Catalonia. There was a general fear (on the part of the C.N.T. leaders as well as the P.O.U.M.) that as a result of the more or less spontaneous action of the armed workers the affair would actually turn into the uprising that Rodríguez Salas, Aiguadé and the French and British sailors were to suppress in the first place. There were other fears in the government palaces. What if the workers really started arresting the government, and chasing out the personnel of the Soviet consulate? It was dangerous to think of calling in even the bourgeois-Stalinist "Karl Marx" (sic) division from the front. (Imagine a "Karl Marx" division being called in to suppress what threatened to become the Barcelona version of the Paris Commune!) The bourgeois-Karl-Marxers would have been stopped by the Syndicalist troops. There would have been war on the loyalist Aragon front.

The good Companys became better. There were hurried long-distance telephone talks with the Anarchist members of the Valencia government. They suggested a compromise. "Do not attempt to disarm the workers!" Companys accepted and announced a "compromise." The C.N.T. acceded. Then the motorized guards arrived from Valencia. The C.N.T. published, radioed and wrote:

"To those who, inside and outside of Spain, have said that order has been 'energetically reestablished' in Barcelona by the forces sent by the central government (Valencia) we make the following explanation: Public order has been imposed by the trade-union organizations, particularly as a result of the agreement of the C.N.T., F.A.I. and the J.J.L.L. (Libertarian Youth) to withdraw their forces from the barricades. The comrades who have arrived from Valencia can testify to this. They found Barcelona in peace."

Why did not the trade-union organizations attempt to take over the State power on May 5? The young and the "Friends of Durutti" were ready. The "responsibles" warned of provocation. The Spanish revolutionaries are in the trap of anti-fascism. They are prisoners of a war carried on against obvious foreign aggression. They are in the position of Blanqui and Barbes fighting a war of national defense in alliance with Thiers and McMahon. An attempt at seizing State power now could

*The bloody May days in Barcelona, Negrin's promises to the world powers, the present situation of the Loyalist front, have been clearly foretold by Roberto in his previous articles on Spain. To understand the background, the causes and purposes that form the Spanish mixup, you must read SPAIN TURNS, the 13,000 word statement that appeared in No. 3, vol. 2 of International Review. In response to the many requests, the issue is again made available. Send 15c in stamps to International Review, P. O. Box 44, Sta. O, New York, N. Y., stating that you want the "Spanish" issue.*



only take the form of an insurrection, destructive of the anti-fascist front.

The C.N.T. could have saved itself and the Catalanian workers a great deal of trouble by becoming the government in July. That does not mean they would have stayed in power or would have thus solved the social problem in Spain. A general election at the time when the population was almost wholly with the elements that stopped the generals' immediate victory on July 19 would have handed over the government of the generality to the Catalanian trade-union organization. (Yes, voting is possible in the war-time; it can be easier managed in the camps of the people's army than in the city.) The anti-fascist militia would have backed up a mandate by which the worker organizations could have gotten the constitutional right (claim), nationally and internationally, to manage their own affairs. That could have been made the end of Companys. If the Cortes could dismiss Zamora, why could not the Catalanian parliament remove Companys? But there is something like anti-parliamentary cretinism, in every way as harmful to the workers' interests as social-democratic ministerialism. As it was, anti-parliamentary anarchists, speaking of the destruction of the State, and the Poumists, prattling of Soviets, but fearing to break the anti-fascist front, became ministers in a government they did not control—to be dismissed at will by Companys and to make possible the nourishing and growth of another popular agency, the P.S.U.C., the united bourgeois-Stalinists of Catalonia, an organization that appreciates the political value of controlling "duly constituted" State machinery.

Now we have a truce, with the infamous Pozas, at the head of the Valencia police troops, replacing Rodríguez Salas and his assault guards as the instrument of "public order." The anarcho-syndicalists register a mild protest and mumble about Catalanian autonomy. In Castilla the assassination of anarcho-syndicalist militants goes on. In back of the lines the hold of the Stalinist police is almost complete. Miaja and the Spanish general staff are the messenger boys of Goriev. Negrin's promise to the diplomatic circles of the world to return the factories and certain estates to the "rightful owners" and to guarantee the safety of the Church was received with grumbling by the old U.G.T. radicals, who are possibly starting to realize they have been led by their noses back to April 14. Some of them cannot understand even now how Prieto, whom they execrate, and the Stalinists, whom they used to connect with the Russian October, and Azaña, whom they never trusted, happened to have arrived at the same program. Where is Araquistáin's fiery revolutionarism of 1935-36? Does he remember his promise that "February 1936 does not stand for the recurrence of April 14" but for "a social revolution that shall liquidate the existing system for good?" All is forgotten. The new troops no longer swear allegiance to the flag of revolution but to the republican tricolor. They thrill now to other martial music than the "Internationale," and like the farmer-boy troops under McMahon, the rawest, the youngest, burn with a holy hatred for the "radical," that is, for the heroes of July 19.

The C.N.T. is cornered. The F.A.I. is cornered. Bertoni correctly describes their situation, when he writes:

"The war in Spain, divested of any idea of a social transformation, of revolutionary grandeur, of a universal meaning is only a vulgar war for national independence that must be fought in order to avoid the extermination proposed by the world plutocracy. It remains a terrible question of life or death, but it is no longer a war affirming a new social order and a new

humanity. One can say that everything is not yet lost. But in reality, everything is menaced and surrounded. Our people speak the same language of renunciation that Italian socialism spoke when fascism was advancing. Beware of provocations! Calm and serenity! Order and discipline! All things that politically reduce themselves to *laissez-faire*. And just as in Italy fascism finished by triumphing, so in Spain, anti-socialism in the republican cloak will conquer, unless for some unforeseen events. It is useless to add that this is merely a statement of things observed. It is not a condemnation of our people. We cannot say how their conduct could be different and efficacious, as long as the Italo-German pressure increases at the front and that of the Bolsheviko-bourgeois grows in the rear."

Berneri—the murdered Camillo Berneri—described the situation when in his letter of April 14, to Federica Monseny (Minister of Hygiene in the Valencia cabinet up to recently), he wrote, calling on her and her comrades to leave the cabinet and go instead among the workers at the front and behind the lines:

"The government is in Valencia and from there hail the assault guards that are now disarming the revolutionaries formed for defense. Villanesa (Spanish village where workers were massacred by the assault guards about a month ago) evokes the memory of Casas Viejas (where peasants seizing the land were shot down by Azaña's civil guards some years before July). The civil guards and the assault guards keep the arms. Their job is to control the 'uncontrollables,' that is, disarm the revolutionary nuclei, take away from them the few rifles and pistols they possess. This is taking place while the interior front (the reactionary menace behind the lines) has not been liquidated. This is taking place during a civil war in which all kinds of surprises are possible and in regions quite close to the front." And he pointed out how the top of the army has been taken over almost entirely by elements who have no sympathy with the popular cause, but were interested in the suppression of "July 19." And he pointed out how the foreign press, inspired by the Valencia Ministry of the Interior, echoed the call for annihilation of the "uncontrollables," that is, the anti-fascist fighters that stopped the generals at the beginning of the civil war. He pointed out how all of this was leading to the conclusion of a peace, now favored by certain diplomatic and government circles in England and France, which (the words of Jean Zyromski) "would not only signify the stop of the Spanish revolution but also the annulment of the social conquests that have been realized." "The problem for you and for many other comrades," he wrote to Monseny, "is to choose between the Versailles of Thiers and the Paris of the Commune, before Thiers and Bismarck complete their *holy alliance* . . ."

The May days offered at least the appearance of the workers' victory. But there is more tragedy ahead. May is a prelude to more monstrous provocations, to new floods of blood. These will be found necessary before Catalonia is considered safe and sane enough for the "big ones" playing the poker of world politics in Geneva.

Already in December 17, 1936, Pravda wrote:

"As for Catalonia, the purge of the Trotskyist and Anarcho-syndicalist elements has begun. *This work will be conducted with the same energy as in the U.S.S.R.*

I can assure the set of agents of international capital that have their offices in Moscow that the trade-union workers of Barcelona—especially because they received their education in a certain non-Leninist-Zinovievist school—will not cringe before superior



power. If they must die because of overwhelming odds, they will die fighting. As a movement, they have survived the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. Indeed, they played an important part in burying it.

## Camillo Berneri Killed

**A** WORD ABOUT some of those who fell.

Before the trade-union workers had chased the Stalino-bourgeois okhrana off the streets, the professional killers did some horrible work. They are for the most part the same men who as Civil guardsmen and assault guards used to track down and murder the labor militants in the underground days of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship and then broke strikes in Zamora's and Azaña's republic.

In San Andrés 20 or so C.N.T. men were taken out of their homes, put into an ambulance and finished off in the cemetery. Many others were caught singly and beaten to death by the professional sadists who change uniforms with the change of regime but are always there to do the bloody work.

Murdered: Domingo Ascaso. (You know what the name Ascaso stands for.) Murdered: Bravo.

Our beautiful Camillo Berneri taken out of his home in the middle of the night. He did not know what was happening in the city.

The plan was to finish off the "brains" on the nights of May 3 or 4—to act quickly, noiselessly, surprising them in their beds, if possible, but to get them always singly, so that they could not escape the destruction at the hands of the Stalino-bourgeois killer bands, who followed closely the fast-moving procedure made memorable by Goering's trusted men on June 30, 1934.

Berneri was found with a comrade. They dragged them out of the house. Berneri was physically weak, worn down by his illness. Berneri, ill, feeble in the hands of his executioners struggled with all the puny strength at his disposal. That made them laugh. The learned author of *The Anti-semitic Jew*, *Attractive Work* and other philosophic and politico-social works, with the puny body and calm, unspeaking, observing head that seemed to be a thing apart, looking on the struggle, was fighting for life. That made the professionals laugh.

They dragged him into their automobile. He was found, with his clothing torn away, beaten, stabbed, shot.

Berneri must have fought till his last moment. About the time of the March on Rome, he was also beaten, imprisoned. Yet he spat back into the face of Mussolini's system, leaving his position at the University of Camerino rather than to bow to the fascist rule. They finally got Berneri.

What will the nice "unitarian" comrades who publish a new *Avanti* in Paris say, to this? In every issue, they include a charming tale about a fairy "colcos" on the banks of Mother Volga or a prose poem on the magic promises of the "nuova Costituzione sovietica," which are regularly provided by a paid prevaricator comfortably housed in the distant East. In every issue a grandiloquent appeal for unity. Unity for what? Unity in the next "war for democracy?" What will the "unitarian" comrades, who may not be quite aware that they have been taken in the service of Boss Joe, write about Berneri. For did not Camillo Berneri belong to all of us?

Will they, the "maximalists" of yore, remember to compare his death with that of Luxemburg and Liebknecht? Those, too, were cornered—in some house on Mannheimer Street. The restorers of law and order dragged them toward Eden Hotel.

They finished off Liebknecht on the way; "killed trying to run away." Was Berneri killed in flight?

By then Rosa must have offered a ludicrous sight. The struggling Berneri, his arms twisted out of their sockets by the stalwarts, who were making the *Pravda* prophecy of December 17, 1936, come true, must have offered a ludicrous sight to the hefty and confident representatives of such big world powers: Stalin, Negrin, the British and French bourgeoisie.

At Hotel Eden everybody stopped drinking, playing cards, being polite when she was dragged in. They exclaimed in pleased surprise: "Roeschen! Da ist ja die Hure! (Rosie! Why, it's the whore herself!)"

Then they took turns in beating her in *die Fresse*—in the mouth. And they beat Camillo Berneri in the snout. Liebknecht—reported all the respectable correspondents of the newspapers of the world—was killed in flight, while Rosa Luxemburg was lynched by "the people."

In the falsifications sent to all good social-minded journals of the world, a raging Berneri lost his life in an extremist uprising against the principle of law and order.

## CONDITION OF WORKERS IN THE U.S.S.R.

• Yvon

From "*Ce qu'est devenue la révolution russe*"

"The USSR is a paradise for the sycophant writer, the publicity man, the social slummer. Their Western brothers know and appreciate this. That is one of the reasons for the appearance of the new political type, the Stalinist liberal, who now helps to strengthen their master's hold on the labor movement of the world. The bold statement of truth will help to loosen the death clutch.

### Wages

The evolution of real wages in the Soviet Union can be easily traced by establishing how much bread could be bought by a worker receiving an average wage if he spent all his earnings in the purchase of bread. Here are the figures for the city of Moscow:

	Before the war	1925-27	1933	1934	1935	1936
Monthly wages of average worker in roubles . . . . .	30	100	130	150	170	190
Price of a kilo of rye bread in roubles . . . . .	0.05	0.125	0.30	0.50	1	0.85
Monthly purchasing power of wages in rye bread (kgs.) . . .	600	800	430	300	170	225

### Remarks:

1. The price of wheat bread has maintained itself at about double the price of rye bread. The curve obtained above would therefore remain the same if it were given in terms of wheat bread. But it is rye bread that is mostly used by the Moscow worker. Rye bread should therefore serve us as a base.

2. The figures for the years of 1925-1927 (the highest point of the Nep) offer a close description of reality. At that time the prices of agricultural produce were very low—in contrast to the high prices of manufactured commodities. Today both agri-



cultural produce and manufactured articles are too expensive for the average income.

3. When it is related to our norm based on the cost of bread, the living standard of the worker before the war is found to have been actually higher than today—since manufactured articles were cheaper.

4. The years 1935 and 1936 brought a greater differentiation in incomes and consequently a marked amelioration in the living standard of the privileged Soviet folk. But the average real wage—which we have taken as our base—has moved downward.

There is always something arbitrary about comparisons made between the living standards of different countries, as customs and conditions vary nationally. The reader may, however, find a bench mark in the following parallel. In 1927 the degree of satisfaction of the needs of the Moscow worker was actually comparable to that of the Parisian worker of today (1936).

Below is a table of the present Soviet "wage categories" (early 1936). The differences in income correspond exactly to the existing differences in living standards, since, in accordance with the arrangement instituted in 1935, prices of commodities have become the same for everybody.

#### *Monthly salaries in Moscow (roubles)*

	<i>Extremes</i>	<i>Usual Salary</i>
<i>Worker</i> . . . . .	from 70 to 400 r.	125 to 200 r.
<i>Clerk</i> . . . . .	from 80 to 250 r.	130 to 180 r.
<i>House Servant</i> . . . . .	from 50 to 60 r.	

*evidently with food and lodging.*

"Middle" clerks and technicians from 300 to 800 roubles.

Big "responsibles" and specialists, officials, professors, actors, writers, etc., from 1,500 to 10,000 and more. Quite a number of incomes ranging from 20,000 to 30,000 roubles a month<sup>1</sup>.

The salary schedule given above holds good for Communists as well as non-Communists. The relatively low maximum that the members of the C.P.S.U. were not supposed to pass during the first years of the Revolution had been done away with a long time ago.

#### *Pensions*

*Workers' pensions:* from 25 to 80 roubles a month; no other privileges.

*Pensions of widows of high functionaries and big specialists:* from 250 to 1,000 roubles a month, besides free villas or apartments for life-time use, scholarships for the children and sometimes for the grandchildren of the deceased.

Considering the two tables, we see that there are marked differences within each of the given categories (from 70 r. to 400 r. in the case of the workers, for example). Between the categories (why not say classes?), on the other hand, the difference runs from the pensioned worker's 25 r. to the 10,000 r. and more received monthly by the privileged Soviet citizen during his activity.

I think it is unnecessary to add that the average pension of 30 to 50 roubles (which in actual practice the worker has a hard time getting) is literally a "pension of poverty." This has been especially true since 1935, with the suppression of the workers' chance to get food at lower prices with the help of their food cards.

<sup>1</sup>The good people who may be inclined at first sight, to doubt these figures will understand a notice published in *Izvestia* of March 4, 1936, which reproduces a decree of the Council of People's Commissars establishing four prizes for the editing of an elementary history manual for use in the primary schools. The prizes are for a hundred thousand, seventy-five thousand, fifty thousand and twenty-five thousand roubles.

#### *Deductions from Wages*

From the salaries indicated above there are made a number of open and disguised deductions. These are really taxes that are laid directly on the pay envelope. They are:

*Wage tax (so named):* from 0.67% to 3.3% of the salary or wage, with exoneration for wages below 150 roubles.

*Cultural tax, for the upkeep of theatres, libraries, etc.:* from 0.93% to 2.8% of the wage.

*Assessment for "cooperatives"* (though there are no more co-operatives in Russia): from 1 to 2% of the wage.

*"Trade-union" assessment* (as membership in the State "trade-unions" is practically obligatory): 2% of the wage.

*State Loan* (theoretically free, but in practice quite obligatory): 10% of the wage.

*Assessments* (actually obligatory) for various societies and social enterprises 1% of the wage.

We see that altogether from 15 to 21% of the worker's wages is taken out of the worker's pay envelope even before the payment of the wage is made. This is money that the worker never sees. All you need to do to verify this is to take a look at the pay books in any factory.

Alongside of these direct taxes, we find very high indirect taxes on wine, tobacco and alcohol. The Soviet State has not passed up the chance to poison its people with vodka (grain alcohol) in order to bolster up its budget.

There is something archaic about the existence of all these taxes, since the State, having a monopoly of the exchange of commodities, takes what it wants from the producer as well as from the consumer by arbitrarily fixing all prices. In 1935, for example, the Soviet State bought rye from the peasant at 6.5 kopeks a kilo and resold it as flour in Moscow at 2.10 roubles a kilo and as bread at a rouble a kilo. (The rouble contains one hundred kopeks.)

#### *"Additions" to Soviet Wages*

The legend of the Soviet "salary supplement" is so widely spread that we must deal with it in detail.

In his calculation of production prices, every factory director or head of a Soviet enterprise adds 30 kopeks to each rouble written down for wages. These 30 kopeks are put under the heading of "Social Security." The State Bank effects the transfer of these sums to the various State organisms concerned.

It is natural for us to be interested in the following question (or questions):

What does this 30% of the workers' wages represent? Where does this sum really go? Who profits by it?

To find an answer, we shall have to take a close look at the official budget for "Social Security."

Now there exists no public Soviet budget that tells the manner of distribution of the 30% deducted beforehand from the product of labor—and for a very good reason! A published budget of this kind would have to mention that a part of the money it disposes of is devoted to certain purposes that are hardly worthy of a government labelling itself as "proletarian." We are therefore obliged to refer only to the admitted budget for "Social Security." Such a document was published in *Izvestia*, of July 9, 1935. Its total of about 9 billion roubles indicates that half of the money collected for "Social Security" did not figure in the expenditures given under the same heading, since 30% of the wages of the USSR<sup>2</sup> represents at least twelve billion roubles.

<sup>2</sup>About 40 billion in 1935. (Zhdanov's speech, Leningrad *Pravda*, December 26, 1934.)

(Continued on page 76)



# "PROLETARIAN" LITERATI TO JAIL • Victor Serge

From "Révolution Proletarienne," Paris

Beginning with 1924-1925, the year of the defeat of the left opposition, a group of rather mediocre Soviet publicists and writers attempted, at the official encouragement of the Political Bureau, and without regard for the means employed—to impose a uniform on Russian literature. The Association of Proletarian Writers censored, bullied, boycotted. According to the degree of complaisance of the author dealt with, they increased or diminished the rations of cheese and ham that were allotted to the writing men during the famine . . . (These rations were quite naturally simply refused to me.)

At the head of this gang stood the incessant maker of congress speeches, the most prolix and dullest of publicists, Leopold Averbach, the secretary-general of the A.P.W., related by marriage to Yagoda, the boss of the G.P.U.

Stalin used to receive him in audience. And it was Averbach who invented the term "socialist realism," a short while before he was half-shelved—when Stalin turned his nose the other way and decided to encourage the much more gifted writers of bourgeois formation (Alexis Tolstoi, etc.). On April 23, 1932, the functionaries of the Association of Proletarian Writers read in the papers that their organization no longer existed. They hastened to express their approval. In a long speech, Averbach denounced his errors, and was named secretary of the Communist organization of the work-shops of Magnitogorsk. He did not idle at his new job. He soon staged an agitational trial, as a result of which several poor devils were shot. Yes, I have known him for some time. It was Averbach who had me boycotted as a non-conformist by the publishing houses of the USSR.

But other notables in his team of go-getters continued their work of organizing Soviet literature, and even world literature, in accordance with the new orders from up high. There was Bela Illes, who had himself photographed as a "red soldier of honor" at the international congress in Kharkov. Bruno Jascinski managed the magazine *International Literature*, which was published in Moscow in four languages. (Jascinski had been expelled from France for his *Je Brûle Paris* (I Burn Paris)). The *Humanité* ran serially his long novels on the reeducation of the saboteurs-engineers by the G.P.U. . . . I remember how he was received in Moscow with flowers and banquets. He was a political refugee from Poland; Bela Illes was an Hungarian refugee. As official playwrights, Afinoguenov and Kirshon made millions. Approved by the sections of the C.C., their plays ran in all theatres of the USSR. In his *Fear*, Afinoguenov jeered at the scared Russian intellectuals. He has now ample opportunity to test his own courage in prison. His *Aristocrats* dealt with the educative value of the concentration camps; to this educational influence he must be getting ready to submit himself at present. The literary heroes of yesterday are today in jail, under the gravest charges.

It was Kirshon who headed the Soviet delegation at the Congress of Defense of Culture in Paris in 1935. In reply to Magdeleine Paz, he attributed my deportation to my "complicity" in the Kirov affair, though I had been in prison for two years before . . . Today the *Pravda* reveals that he himself had "for 14 years entertained the closest relations with the Trotskyist Averbach . . ." And he is accused—as are Averbach, Bella Illes,

Bruno Jascinski—of misusing 5 million roubles to sing the praise of Yagoda by means of a collective work, in which all the outstanding Soviet writers collaborated, published on the occasion of the inauguration of the White Sea-Baltic Sea Canal, dug, as is well known, by several hundred thousand convicts undergoing reeducation through forced labor . . .

The case of Bruno Jascinski is somewhat more serious. It appears that he was admitted into the C.P. of the Soviet Union upon the recommendation of the Communist deputy in the Polish Diet, Thomas Dombal, who was incidentally denounced in the *Pravda* as a convicted spy and who has therefore been shot or interned in the special camps on the Solovetsky Islands.

To complete his score, Jascinski is said to have obtained Soviet visas for two Polish spies . . . Jascinski is lost.

His novel on saboteurs in Turkestan who are led to a new life by the forceful methods of the G.P.U. is entitled, I believe, *Man Changes His Skin*. Will Jascinski manage to change his skin sufficiently to get out of prison one day?

Their sudden arrest must have been the greatest surprise possible to those Thermidorian men of letters. On the eve of their fall, they exercised a directing influence on Soviet literature. The harm they have done to the socialist spirit is immeasurable. They were the zealous tools of all kinds of persecution. With an unspeakable impudence, they falsified ideas, sentiments, imposing everywhere a realism based on conformism and lies, a "socialism" built on police and the cult of the leader. They strove to institute in the country the customs of servility. They strove to legalize the privileges that are the complement of servility. That is, however, not the reason for their disgrace. We are at Brumaire. The literary men of the Thermidor must now disappear—together with the police agents whom it was their job to laud. This frame-up is aimed at people who themselves prepared such frame-ups for others.

The logic of this development is at the same time general and circumstantial. You cannot do away with Yagoda and let Averbach live, though Averbach may be quite ready to submit. Averbach knows too much. Averbach knows the under side of the Yagoda affair. He understands that every act of violence, every act of repression perpetrated by the head of the G.P.U. was perpetrated at the precise orders of the secretary-general of the Party. He knows that all responsibility rests on Stalin. And because Averbach is the most zealous of Stalinist bureaucrats, he can be done away with only with the aid of charges that are founded entirely on imposture. The charge of Trotskyism levelled against him is an egregious piece of clownery. The people that clustered about Averbach must be disposed of for the same reason: they see too clearly in this affair. The cart takes on more passengers . . .

Here is an odious mixture of farce and tragedy. Does the International Association for the Defence of Culture, which was organized at that Paris congress of 1935, still exist? If it still exists, will it ignore the killing of the mentioned Stalinist writers? My questions will surely make the reader laugh. But can we laugh in the face of such an affair?

I watched with a heavy heart the powerful and joyous crowds that marched on this First of May. I could not tear myself away from the thought of my comrades, of our brothers in the prisons over there. The same drama is repeated every First of May in Stalin's prisons. The jailed October combatants want to celebrate. They want to show that they are still among the living, that they still resist. They try to sing the *International*. They are showered from a fire hose. They are clubbed down and dragged off to solitary cells . . . How many *Internationals*



have they sung in their will to hold their ground, after shootings and unpublished assassinations that we know nothing about? What has taken place—what is happening at this moment in the most crowded jails in the world, in the vastest concentration camps in the world?

## THIS IS CAPITALISM

• Jonathan Ayres

*This continues the series dealing with "Capitalism and State Capitalism." Previous installments of Mr. Ayres' analysis of contemporary capitalism appeared in the November, January and May issues of "International Review." The next article advances Mr. Ayres' analysis and considers the ideological finery in which contemporary capitalism dresses itself in certain situations. Indispensable to all who want to find the order of understanding in today's political welter.*

**W**HEN IS a society "capitalist?"

It is evident that the question has something to do with the matter of making a living.

In their activity of making a living, people "stand in relation not only to nature, but to each other." In their activity of making a living people enter into certain relations with each other. Each society is distinguished by its dominant social-economic relation.

In the Greek City-States and in the Roman Empire, there were found free artisans and agriculturists who worked for themselves, and merchants who travelled from region to region buying cheap and selling dear. But the social relation that dominated the activity of making a living was the slave-master relation.

The slave belonged to his master, like the tools and the land possessed by the latter. The slave labored. What he produced belonged to his master. The master gave the slave enough to subsist on. The greater part of the product of the slave's labor was taken by the slave-owner, who shared it with a number of social-economic partners: the overseer, the soldier, the priest, the politician, the poet, the prostitute and the merchant who bought his excess goods.

Similarly under serfdom, in the Middle Ages, there were free handicraft workers in the towns. They produced useful things which they themselves sold either directly to the final consumer or to merchants. But the dominant social-economic relation, imposing its pattern on feudal society, was the serf-lord relation. The peasant worked to produce means of subsistence for himself and his family. But he also rendered service and imposts forced upon him by the lord. The product of the serf's surplus labor went to feed and clothe the feudal lord and the lord's social-economic partners: the armed retainer, the priest, the singer, the merchant who bought the lord's excess goods.

The slave of antiquity and the serf of the Middle Ages were exploited. That is, laboring under conditions controlled by others, they produced enough for their needs and then over and above their needs of subsistence. The product of this surplus labor was appropriated by the persons that controlled the conditions under which the slave and serf labored: the slave master, the feudal lord and their various partners, guests and parasites. If the laborers of antiquity and the Middle Ages had worked merely to produce the necessary means of subsistence for themselves and their kin—if they had performed no surplus labor, the product

of which was appropriated by the slave-owner and the feudal lord—there would have been no slave masters and no feudal lords. Exploitation of labor rests on this performance of surplus labor and the appropriation of its product by a class of non-producers, who because of this contradictory arrangement must control and guide the labor of the productive workers.

Capitalist production is also an exploitation economy. Yet in capitalist society there are no chattel slaves, no serfs, no slave owners, no feudal lords. The rule is for the exploiters and exploited within capitalism to have equal legal rights. Furthermore, in the complex of capitalist production, the relation between the laborers and the appropriators of their surplus product does not appear openly as an exploitation relation. To all appearances, the income of the non-producers has nothing to do with their exploitation of the workers. And the means of subsistence gotten by the latter also appears as a form of "income."

How do people make a living in the world about us?

In the backward sections of the earth there are still social structures in which things are produced for the immediate consumption of the producers and their kinsfolk. And nestling within the most industrialized districts of the earth and populating vast backward regions are farmers, peasants and artisans who work for themselves, producing with their own tools and material useful things that they sell in the local and regional markets. Economically and socially these are the pre-capitalist social structures of the earth. They continue to be drawn into a relation of exchange with capitalist production and finally succumb to the capitalist scheme of things, either joining the circle of the capitalist exploiters or the ranks of the capitalist exploited.

But within the sphere of capitalist production people make a living in the following ways:

1. Many work for wages and produce useful things and services that can be sold in the market. Some people receive salaries and bonuses for supervising and guiding the activity of the wage workers. Some people get an income (which is at times only a small part of their general income; there are big and small investors) by investing in the productive concerns. That is, their money is applied to the purchase of means of production, and the service of the wage workers and supervisors.

When the products of the enterprise are sold, the investors pocket the *profit*, the difference between the total cost of production (including the needs of continued reproduction) and the selling price of the product.

2. But these productive enterprises do not usually sell their commodities directly to the final consumer. They sell them first to wholesale commercial concerns, which resell them to wholesale-retail commercial concerns, which resell them to retail concerns, which resell them to the final consumer. Each sale is made at a *profit*. Therefore persons with money find it *profitable* to invest in the commercial enterprises. With the money invested, housing facilities, fixtures and means of transportation are acquired; clerks are hired to sell and keep accounts; traveling salesmen, advertisers and publicity men are engaged to boost sales in face of competition; managers are called to supervise all these operations.

3. People who own land rent or lease it for agricultural purposes, for factory or house building, or they "let out" their buildings to concerns and individuals.

4. In order to carry on their activity, industrial, commercial and "real property"-holding concerns often need investments of sums of money they have not on hand. They borrow from banks, paying interest on the money borrowed. Some of the



money used by the banking enterprises is their own investment. Most of it is usually composed of savings and other funds entrusted them, and for the use of which they themselves pay interest. The banks are nearly always more than mere intermediaries between the possessors of money and the industrial and commercial concerns seeking loans. They often also control or own industrial and commercial concerns and real property. Thus the income of the investors in the banking concerns represents not only interest on the money loaned but also such forms of income as industrial and commercial profit and rent. The banks employ clerks, managers, and various experts.

Money for investment in the industrial, commercial and banking enterprises is also procured through loans or investments in the form of bonds and corporation "stock." Stock and bond brokers specialize in finding — in lieu of a "commission" — customers for these "shares of profit."

5. We also find in capitalist society a good number of persons who get their income because they are in the employ of the State. They are legislators, executives, government clerks, policemen, soldiers, army officers, spies, diplomats, consular employees, and executioners. Usually the State also runs certain coordinating services that are found useful by the productive, commercial and banking concerns of the country (departments of Labor, Interior, Commerce, etc.) Clerks and experts are employed to man such services.

Usually the State runs schools, where, under the tutelage of teachers, paid by the State, the youth of capitalist society is offered an education fitting them, in a general way, for the economic and political conditions of the country.

Usually the State provides the country certain useful services by organizing and running enterprises in the branches of communications and transportation, as the postal service, telegraph and railways. There it employs wage workers and a supervisors' staff like any other capitalist concern. The tendency is for the State to take over branches of industry that can no longer be run profitably by private entrepreneurs. State ownership of industrial and commercial enterprise is limited in most capitalist countries. But under cataclysmic conditions, when the economic process cannot be efficiently organized by private capitalist effort, State ownership tends to spread.

The State gets its revenue from taxes and the sale of government bonds or loans. Taxes are paid by taxable persons, that is, by persons who have the money (property) with which to pay taxes. The same kind of persons buy government bonds. The investors in the State run enterprises are these buyers of government bonds.

6. A number of economic persons in our society do not work for wages, and do not get all or most of their income from investments in profitable enterprises, and are not employed to mediate and share the interests of the investors in the productive, commercial and banking concerns of capitalism, and are not in the service of the State. They are scientists, professors, doctors, writers, artists, musicians, gamblers, prostitutes, lawyers, thieves, clergymen, etc. These people get their incomes by rendering productive or unproductive services to individuals and concerns, and collect fees or are paid from funds established by the State or philanthropists from among the investor stratum.

We therefore distinguish the following categories of income in capitalist society.

1. Wages (including the wages paid in the State owned enterprises).

2. Commercial and industrial profit, interest and rent pocketed by investors and entrepreneurs of capitalist enterprises.

3. "Wages of superintendence:" the salaries and bonuses of the supervisors in the capitalist enterprises.

4. The wages and salaries of the clerks, advertisers, publicity men, etc. not employed in apparently productive activities.

5. State employees, paid from taxes and government loans.

6. The fees and salaries of the various economic persons (writers, lawyers, prostitutes, etc.) who derive their income from the pockets of the recipients of all the kinds of income mentioned above.

Now who are the exploited and who are the exploiters in capitalism? Who labors productively, who produces, and who lives on the surplus labor of the producers?

Upon closer consideration we notice the following facts in the economic process of capitalism, and some of them are too puzzling to be stated any other way than as questions.

1. Things are produced to be sold—at a profit. Money is invested in the purchase of means of production and labor power. The commodities produced are sold dearer than they cost to produce. The difference between the cost of production and the selling price is the profit of the productive enterprise.

2. The means of production are owned and controlled by the investors and their representatives — the taskmasters of capitalist production.

3. The producers in capitalism are free laborers. They do not "form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, etc." But they are also free in a second sense. Unlike the artisans of the medieval towns, they neither own nor control the means of production that they manipulate. They are propertyless.

4. Being propertyless, the producers of capitalism can make a living only by selling their labor power, their capacity to work, the only commodity they possess, to the people who own and control the means of production. They sell their labor power at its market price, for wages, which appears, however, as the price of labor, "a certain quantity of money paid for a certain quantity of labor."

5. Not only enterprises of production but also commercial, banking and land-owning concerns find their activity profitable, and attract investments.

6. In so far as the State derives its revenue from taxes, it gets its revenue mostly from the pockets of the people who are investors. For if the producers have no more than their wages to live on they cannot pay taxes to any important extent. A tax placed on the necessities they need to live on amounts to a depreciation of their wages. On the other hand, the independent agricultural producer can be taxed heavily; he has property. He can be taxed out of existence as an independent small property holder.

7. In the case of joint stock corporations, it is pretty hard to put your finger on the "capitalist." The person of the capitalist, the phenomenon of ownership, appears to have become diffused here among thousands of persons who hold big or small stacks of shares in the enterprise.

8. At times the directors and others supervisors of a capitalist concern find their situation more advantageous than some of the shareholders. Do the directors and supervisors help to make up the composite "capitalist?"

9. Who is the capitalist in the case of a nationalized factory or industry or batch of industries? Is the State the capitalist? But the State is not a "private" person.

This is what happens in capitalism.

Useful things are produced to be sold. Every commodity presented in the market is sold at its market price. That is,



it exchanges for so much money (gold), a universal equivalent in the exchange of all commodities. We say that the price of a commodity fluctuates around the value of the commodity as a result of changes in the supply and demand of the commodity in question. Thus determined by the value of the commodity, the price is really the money form of the value of the commodity.

Now what determines the value of the commodity? Since it is expressed through its exchange in other commodities (money being a commodity that is a universal equivalent of all commodities), it can only be determined by an element that is common to all commodities. This is the socially necessary labor time contained in the finished product—the average working time necessary to produce it under the normal social and technical conditions at the time of its sale. (Labor time is, of course, the measure of quantity of labor). Thus we say that one pair of shoes is two times as valuable as another pair of shoes because into its making went twice as much socially necessary labor time, which, from the angle of the finished product is the sum of the socially necessary labor applied to the production of the “raw material,” of the secondary material, of the value of the machinery and housing worn away in the production of all these commodities and the labor that was socially necessary to transform all this material (raw and secondary material, machinery and housing) into the finished product.

When the socially necessary labor time required for the production of a commodity is reduced, its price falls; when it is increased, the price rises, other circumstances remaining the same. On the other hand, the price of a commodity rises above its value if the demand exceeds the supply of the commodity, and it falls below its value when the demand does not equal the supply. The price of a commodity is therefore the monetary expression of the value of the commodity, disturbed by the changing conditions of the market.

If the selling prices of commodities represent the socially necessary labor that went into their making, then the profit and interest sought by the industrial and commercial entrepreneurs, by the banker, by the buyers of government bonds or the bonds sold by private concerns, by small and big shareholders, can have only one source: labor. For this difference of selling price over investment “can neither arise from the buyer buying the commodities below nor from the seller selling them above their value. For in both cases the gains and losses would balance one another since everyone is in turn buyer and seller. It cannot also come from cheating as cheating can only enrich one at the expense of another but cannot increase the total sum possessed by both, and cannot thus increase the amount of value in circulation.” (*Anti-Duehring*, page 215.) And it cannot be explained as a “renumeration” of the investment. In spite of the common fetishistic expression, money does not make money. Money cannot procreate itself.

In the capitalist economic process, commodities are bought, transformed and then sold at a profit. This profit can only come from the transformation undergone by the commodities that went into the making of the new commodities. Among the commodities bought by the capitalist entrepreneur there is one that can create more value than it itself costs on the market. The capitalist entrepreneur buys two kinds of commodities on the market: (a) material means of production (raw and secondary material, machinery, housing, etc.); (b) labor power.

The raw material and the machinery can only transmit their own value to the new product. The workers' capacity for labor, their labor power, is a living force. Applied in the process of production, it acts on the material means of production, pre-

serving and transferring their value to the new product. It then creates a value over and above its own market cost (value). “The laborer adds fresh value to the subject of his labor, by expending upon it a given amount of *additional* labor, no matter what the specific character and utility of that labor may be.” (*Capital*, vol. 1, p. 180, Kerr.) This is one part of the central deal of capitalism.

People who do not possess and control means of production sell their labor power (their capacity to create use-values) to the people who possess (directly or indirectly through control or appropriation of a part of the product) the means of production. In exchange for their commodity labor power, the workers get wages, expressing in money the market value of their labor power, and therefore representing the cost of the production and reproduction of this commodity. For the worker must be in the condition to sell his labor power again the next day and the day after—at a price that can buy him the quantity of products that he needs to subsist on while working under the social conditions of his time and locality. And during a part of his working day, the laborer reproduces the value of his labor power, his wages. But his capacity to labor must exceed that, or the people in control of the means of production would not find it worth while to hire him. Like the slave producer of antiquity and the peasant serf of the middle ages, the free worker of the present society expends his labor power longer than he needs to create the value of the means of his own subsistence. In other words, a part of the work day the laborer of capitalism works for himself, getting the value of the product of that part of his labor in the form of wages. But the rest of his labor is unpaid labor, surplus labor—surplus because it exceeds what the laborer and his kind get. What is done with the product of this surplus labor?

In capitalism as in slave society and under feudalism, we have the phenomenon of appropriation by non-producers of the product of the producers' surplus labor. But in capitalism society this exploitation relation is disguised by the fact that it expresses itself not in a person to person relation but in a material form through the exchange of commodities. In capitalism there are no chattel slaves, no serfs, no slave owners, no feudal lords. The workers and the various persons who live on the workers' surplus labor have equal legal rights. In capitalism things are bought and sold, and the labor power of the workers is one of the things that is bought and sold. We saw that the wage workers apply their labor power to the means of production and produce useful things having a greater exchange value than the cost of the means of existence they need to recuperate their spent energy. The products of this labor are sold by the people in control of the conditions of production. The value contained in the commodities is thus realized in money. What is done with the money that represents the market value of the workers' product?

One part is put back into production to reconstitute it on the same scale. A sum is spent in wages (1) enabling the workers to buy food, clothing and shelter for themselves and their kin so that they may be able to work again. Another sum is used to defray the cost of the means of production (2) the value of which went into the making of the sold commodity (raw and secondary material, the wear and tear of machinery, buildings.

What is left is the surplus beyond the cost of production (3). A part of this is usually applied to the purchase of additional labor power and additional means of production in order to expand the enterprise. This is accumulation.

Another part of the surplus, of the third portion of the realized



value of the product, is appropriated by the people in control of the productive activity of capitalism and their aids, parasites and partners. It is taken by all these worthies for:

1. The purchase of their means of subsistence and pleasure.
2. The upkeep of the personnel and equipment of the State.
3. And in the case of the mercantile and banking establishments, also for the staff and equipment that the commercial and banking entrepreneurs must wield in order to be able to share with the people in control of the productive process in the appropriation of the surplus product of capitalism.

It is the third portion of the value of the capitalist product—taken by the people in charge of the economic activity of capitalism for themselves and other non-producers and for the needs of accumulation—which parallels the surplus product of the slave's and serf's labor appropriated formerly by the slave owners and the feudal lord and their partners, guests and parasites. This value, as the product of surplus labor, is called *surplus-value*.

Surplus value is usually appropriated by the dominant social groups of capitalism in the following forms: industrial and commercial profits, dividends, interest, royalties, rent, State taxes, "wages of superintendence" (of directors and managers of capitalist enterprises) and in several other minor shapes of privileged income (which may become important under special circumstances.)

Surplus value, no matter in what form it is appropriated, is the product of the workers' unpaid labor. But that is not so apparent to the common sense view general in our society. Here the fact that commodities are bought and sold—the money relation—conceals the unpaid labor of the wage worker. Wages, the price of labor power, appear as the price of labor, "a certain quantity of money paid for a certain quantity of labor." Why? because selling his commodity—his capacity for labor—the worker cannot merely separate himself from it and hand it over to the purchaser, his employer. His is a different kind of commodity. Labor power — "the aggregate of these mental and physical capabilities existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use-value of any description"<sup>1</sup>—is part of the working human being. The purchaser can only get it in one form, through the worker's labor, through the worker's production of useful things. And labor can only be measured on the basis of the time it takes to be performed—its duration.

The price of the commodity "labor power" is expressed in our society as the price of "labor for a certain time"—an hour's, a day's, a week's, a month's labor. The value and price of labor power is transformed into wages, the value and price of labor.

"The wage form thus extinguishes every trace of the division of the working day into necessary labor and surplus labor, into paid and unpaid labor. All labor appears as paid labor."<sup>1</sup>

The exploitation relation is quite apparent under feudalism, "where the labor of the worker for himself, and his compulsory labor for his lord, differs in space and time in the clearest way possible. It is emphasized in slave labor, where "even that part of the work in which the slave is only replacing the value of his own means of existence, in which, therefore, in fact, he works for himself alone, appears as unpaid labor. In wage labor on the contrary, even surplus labor, or unpaid labor, appears as paid. There the property-relation conceals the labor of the slave for himself; here the money relation conceals the unrequited labor of the wage laborer. This phenomenal form, which makes the actual relation invisible, and, indeed, shows the direct opposite of that relation, forms the basis of all the juridical notions of both laborer and capitalist, of all the mystifications

of the capitalist mode of production, of all its illusions as to liberty of all the apologetic shifts of the vulgar economists."<sup>2</sup>

Wages as a form of the value of labor power are even more difficult to distinguish when they assume the shape of piece-wages, and its more complicated forms: bonuses and pay for task work. These are only converted forms of time-wages, with the daily or weekly wage being made to depend on the speed of the worker's productive activity, with the average output (simple piece work) or the highest output (individual and group task work and bonuses) as its basis.

"In piece-wages it seems at first sight as if the use-value bought from the laborer was, not the function of his labor-power, living labor, but labor already realized in the product, and as if the price of this labor was determined, not as with time wages, by the fraction,

$$\frac{\text{daily value of labor-power}}{\text{working day of given number of hours}}$$

but by the capacity for work of the producer."<sup>3</sup>

This mystification serves well the apologists of old-fashioned capitalism. It is a most useful argument in the repertory of the professional apologists of capitalism posing as socialism.

<sup>2</sup>*Capital*, (Vol. 1, pp. 591-2, Kerr.)

<sup>3</sup>*Capital*, (Vol. 1, pp. 602-3, Kerr.)

(Continued in next issue)

## MATERIALISM: Methaphysical and Dialectic • Martov

*This is the third installment of Martov's work on "State and Socialist Revolution." The next issue will contain "Marx and the State."*

THE WORKING class is a product of capitalist society. Its mind is subjected to the influence of capitalist society. Its consciousness is developed under the pressure of the bourgeois masters. The school, the church, the barracks, the factory, the press, social life, all contribute to form the consciousness of the proletarian masses. They are all potent factors in the service of bourgeois ideas and tendencies. According to Charles Naine, it was on this observation of fact that the revolutionary socialists, at least in Switzerland, based their belief in the necessity of a dictatorship by a minority of conscious proletarians over the nation and even the majority of the proletariat itself.

Emile Pouget, the prominent syndicalist leader, wrote:

" . . . If democratic mechanism were applied in the labor organizations, the lack of will on the part of the unconscious majority would paralyze all action. The minority is not disposed to abdicate its claim and aspirations before the inertia of a mass that has not yet been quickened with the spirit of revolt. Therefore, the conscious minority has an obligation to act without considering the outlook of the refractory mass . . .

"The amorphous mass . . . numerous and compact though it be, has little reason to complain. It is the first to benefit by the action of the minority . . .

"Who could complain against the disinterested initiative of the minority? Certainly not the unconscious folk to whom the militants barely attribute the role of human zeros—who acquire the numerical value of a zero only when added at the right of a number.

"Here is the enormous difference of method distinguishing syndicalism from democratism. Through its machinery of uni-

<sup>1</sup>*Capital*, (Vol. 1, page 186, Kerr.)



versal suffrage, the latter puts the function of guidance in the hands of the unconscious, the backward (or worse, their representatives). Democratism stifles the minorities that bear in them the future. The syndicalist method gives diametrically opposite results. The impetus is given by the conscious ones, by the rebels. All good wills are called on to act, to participate in the movement."<sup>1</sup>

The recognition of the inevitable mental enslavement of the proletarian masses by the capitalist class is also at the base of P. Orlovsky's conclusions, given in the preceding chapter.

This idea flows, without doubt, from a *materialist* conception. It is based on the observation that the thought of man depends on the material environment.

This idea characterized many socialists and communists, utopian and revolutionary, at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th.

We can discover its traces in Robert Owen, Cabet, Weitling, Blanqui. All recognized that the mental enslavement of the masses came from the material circumstances of their existence in the present society. And all deduced from this condition that only a radical modification of the material circumstances of their existence, only a radical transformation of society, would render the masses capable of directing their own destiny.

But by whom will this transformation be realized?

"The wise educators of humanity sprung from the privileged classes, that is to say, individuals freed from the material pressure weighing on the mind of the masses—they will do it!" That was the answer of the social utopians.

"A revolutionary minority composed of men whom a more or less accidental combination of circumstances has enabled to save their brains and will from this pressure, persons who constitute in our society an exception; that proves the rule—they will do it!" This was the answer of revolutionary communists like Weitling and Blanqui, and the conception of their epigones of the anarcho-syndicalist type, as Pouget and the late Gustave Hérve.

A benevolent dictatorship for some, a violent dictatorship for the others, such is the *deus ex machina* that was to throw up a bridge between the social environment producing the mental enslavement of the masses and the social environment that would render possible their development as human beings.

"Man's character," wrote Robert Owen, "is formed by environment and education . . . The problem flowing from this is the following: to transform these two factors of character in such a manner that man will become virtuous."<sup>2</sup> ("The New Conception of Society").

According to Owen, the task of operating this transformation fell to the legislators, to the philanthropists, to the pedagogues.

Whether pacifist or revolutionary, the utopians—we see—were only *half* materialist. They understood the thesis that has human psychology depend on the material environment in a purely metaphysical manner. They were hardly aware of the *dynamics* of the social process. Their materialism was not *dialectical*.

The state of correlation binding a given aspect of the social consciousness to a given aspect of social life, which is the determining cause of the former, presented itself in the minds of those people as something congealed, as something immovable. That is why they stopped being materialists and became idealists

of the first water as soon as they tried to find out how it was necessary to act practically in order to modify the social milieu and render possible a regeneration of the masses.

Quite a good while ago, in his theses on Feuerbach, Marx observed:

"The materialist doctrine that men are the products of conditions and education, different men therefore the products of other conditions and changed education, forgets that circumstances may be altered by men and that the educator has himself to be educated. This doctrine leads inevitably to the ideas of a society composed of two distinct portions, one of which is elevated above society (Robert Owen for example)."

Applied to the class struggle of the propertyless, this means the following. Impelled by the same "circumstances" of capitalist society that determine their character as an enslaved class, the workers enter into a struggle against the society that enslaves them. The process of this struggle modifies the former "circumstances." It modifies the environment in which the working class moves. By this the working class modifies its own character. From a class reflecting passively the mental servitude possessing it, the propertyless become a class which frees itself actively from all enslavement, including that of the mind.

This process is not at all rectilinear. It does not take in homogeneously all the layers of the proletariat, nor all the phases of its consciousness. It will be far from attaining its full development when the combination of historic circumstances permits, or obliges, the working class to tear from the hands of the bourgeoisie the apparatus of political power. The workers are condemned to penetrate into the realm of socialism when they still bear a good share of those "vices of the oppressed" the yoke of which Lassalle had so eloquently urged them to throw off. As a result of the struggle against capitalism, the proletariat modifies the material milieu surrounding it. It modifies this way its own character and emancipates itself culturally. Exercising its conquered power, the proletariat frees itself completely from the intellectual influence of the old society — in the degree that it realizes a radical transformation of the material milieu, which in the last place determines its character.

But only "finally!" Only at the end of a long, painful, contradictory process, which is analogous to all preceding historic processes in this respect: the social creation assumes its form on the anvil of necessity, under the imperious pressure of immediate needs.

The conscious will of the revolutionary vanguard can appreciably accelerate and facilitate this process. It can never *avoid* it.

Some people presume that if a compact revolutionary minority, animated by the desire to establish socialism, seizes the machinery of government, concentrates in its own hands the means of production and distribution and the control of the organization of the masses and their education, it may—in pursuance of its socialist ideal—create an environment in which the popular mind will little by little be purged of its old heritage and filled with a new content. Only then will the people stand erect and be able to move by its own strength on the road to socialism.

If this utopia could be followed to the end, it would lead to a diametrically opposite result, though we considered it only from the angle of Marx's affirmation that the "educator has himself to be educated." For the practice of *such* a dictatorship, and the relations established between the dictatorial minority and the mass, "educate" the dictators, who may be anything we want them to be but who cannot direct social evolution toward the construction of a new society. That such an education can only corrupt the *masses*, that it can only debase them, does not call for demonstration.

<sup>1</sup>From an article by Pouget: "L'organisation et l'action de la Confédération Générale du Travail" (The Organization and Action of the General Confederation of Labor") published in the collection *Le mouvement social dans la France contemporaine*, pages 34-36.

<sup>2</sup>The quotation is translated from Martov.



The proletarian class considered as a whole—we are using the word in its broadest sense, including intellectual workers whose collaboration in the direction of the State and the administration of the social economy is indispensable till the contrary becomes true—is the only possible builder of the new society, and it must consequently be the only successor of the classes that formerly dominated the functions of government. The propertyless will also find it indispensable to benefit by the active aid, or at least, friendly neutrality of the non-proletarian producers, who are still numerous in the city and countryside. All of this flows from the nature of the social overturn that is the historic mission of the proletariat. This change must manifest itself in every part of the life of society. The proletariat will be able to take in hand the huge heritage of capitalism, without dilapidating it—it will be able to set in motion the gigantic productive forces of capitalism so that the result is real social equality based on the increase of the general well-being—only by giving proof of the maximum of moral energy it can generate. That, we repeat, is an unavoidable condition, which is, in its turn, subordinated to the greatest possible development of organized initiative on the part of all the elements composing the working class. This presupposes an atmosphere that is absolutely incompatible with the dictatorship of a minority or with the permanent satellites of such a dictatorship: terror and bureaucracy.

In the course of the free construction of the new society, the proletariat will reeducate itself and eliminate from its character those traits that are in contradiction with the great problems it will have to solve. This will be true about the working class taken as a whole as well as about each of its component elements. It is evident that the duration of this process will vary for each of these elements. To remain on the firm ground of political reality, the political action of the socialists will have to reckon with this fact. It will have to take into account the slow pace of the necessarily progressive adaptation of an entire class to its new milieu. Every attempt at artificially forcing this process is certain to yield opposite results. Many compromises will be found absolutely inevitable in order to suit the march of history to the intellectual level attained by the different elements within the working class at the moment of the fall of capitalism.

But the final goal justifies only those compromises whose consequences are not in opposition to this goal. Only those compromises are justified which do not bar the road to this goal. For that reason, it is impossible to consider too pronounced compromises made with either the destructive tendency or the conservative inertia typical of one or another section of the working class.

A compromise with the enemy class is nearly always fatal to the revolution. A compromise that guarantees the unity of the class in its struggle against the enemy can only advance the revolution—in the sense that it opens up wide possibilities for the spontaneous direct action of the masses.

True, this result will be obtained at the price of a movement that is slower, more sinuous, as compared with the straight line that a minority dictatorship can trace in the task of revolution. But here as in mechanics what is lost in distance is made up in speed. The gain is made here by overcoming rapidly the inner psychological obstacles that arise in the way of the revolutionary class and hamper it in its attempt to achieve its aims. On the other hand, the straight line, preferred by the doctrinaires of the violent revolution because it is shorter, leads in practice to the maximum of psychological resistance and that way to the minimum creative yield of the social revolution.

## CONDITION OF WORKERS IN U.S.S.R.

(Continued from page 69)

In order to make clearer our study of the question, we shall distribute the heads figuring in the Soviet budget for "Social Security" into three groups:

(In thousands of roubles)

I.—Payment for sick days and accidents, annual	
vacation, maternity pay, etc. . . . .	1,023,500
Retirement and invalidity . . . . .	993,840
Total . . . . .	2,017,340
II.—Public education, pre-school organizations, scholarships, cultural travel, etc. . . . .	
Houses, public gardens, stadia . . . . .	639,150
Inspection of labor and traveling expenses of the "Social Security" department . . . . .	992,500
Total . . . . .	88,400
III.—Care of the sick and medicine, construction and upkeep of hospitals, food for sick, etc. . . . .	
Houses of rest, sanatoriums, beaches, sea-side resorts (construction and upkeep) . . . . .	1,709,160
Total . . . . .	455,750
Grand total . . . . .	2,164,910
	5,902,300

Let us now examine the given divisions in their order:

I.—In case of sickness or injury, the worker has, from the first day, a right to receive security benefits if he has been adjudged to be incapable of working by the *specially* authorized doctor of his factory or the neighborhood where he lives. Free choice in the matter is gone. The visit to the physician resembles a visit to the regimental doctor. You report that you are ill. You get your number at the infirmary. You wait for your turn in the corridor, hoping patiently that you will get the miraculous slip giving you "security."

The worker whose illness is not *acknowledged* by the doctor has the choice of returning immediately to his shop or being branded as a *malingeringer*. The worker who has missed an entire day of work and cannot furnish the authorities the doctor's report is fired as a "deserter from the front of labor."

At the beginning of the Revolution, and even until the era of the five year plans, a sick or injured worker had the right to his wages, and getting them was a simple matter. But a State-employer that wants to "overtake and surpass capitalism" will inevitably begin to nibble away at "social security," which, in fact, is rather inconvenient in face of world competition—especially since the State-employer has since developed such very costly items of the budget as War, Police, Diplomacy. The gnawing away of the "social security" benefits is accomplished gradually, to save appearances. For the lucky recipient of the doctor's "favorable" report, the situation is now as follows:

The benefit varies from half of the wages to the entire salary, depending on the case. For example, the worker who has not joined the State trade-unions—it does not matter how long he has worked at his trade—gets only half of his wages for thirty days and then two-thirds. To get more, he must join the State trade-union. In that case, if he has worked at least two years in one factory and three years at his trade, he will get 100%



of his wages from the start. But if he has been in the factory less than a year, he will get only two-thirds of his wages during his period of illness. That is not merely a good way of binding the worker to his place of work. The State-employer also finds it a convenient way of diminishing the social security benefits to be paid during this period, when so many new workers flock to the factories. More than half of the workers cannot fulfill the required conditions.

Unionized seasonal workers (building trades in general, masons, carpenters, excavators—there is no construction during the five months of the very rigorous winter)—collect, according to their length of stay in the trade, either two-thirds or three-quarters of their wages during the first 20 days, then 100%, but for not more than 75 days altogether. Other workers are paid till the time of their complete reestablishment in health or till they pass into the category of invalids.

The "oudarniks" and the "decorated" workers enjoy a certain advantage. They may get 100% of their wages from the first day they become incapacitated. Miners, on the other hand, can lay claim to the whole of their wage during the period of invalidity *only if they have achieved the full norms required in the tasks assigned to them* for the two months preceding the accident or illness. Making the rate of sick-benefit depend on the rate of work is an innovation that only Soviet "socialism" has found fit to inscribe on its list of assets. Similarly, the right to go on living in case of illness is made to depend on the worker's "good behavior" in the shop. Workers who have left the factory without the consent of the management or workers who have been fired with a "motive" (breach of factory discipline) have no right to social security benefits and lose, when they get a new job, their claim to previous experience in the trade.

The rate of social security aid is established on the basis of the entire salary (includes bonuses), but public holidays are not paid for.

Formerly, it was impossible to collect more than 300 roubles a month as a social security benefit. Thus the recipients of the big salaries were somewhat "inconvenienced" in case of illness. At present limits of this sort hold good only for clerks, properly so called. On the other hand, "workers" like technicians, specialists in commerce, industry, agriculture or accounting, as well as holders of decorations, know no maximum limit. This way the wide differences in income are carried over into the sphere of social security.

Among the acquisitions of the revolution which the State-employer has, on the face of it, not dared to touch are: the annual vacation for all workers and the maternity rest allowed to women workers. Every worker has a right to a yearly vacation of 12 paid work-days. In unhealthful occupations the worker is entitled to 24 free days. The big specialists and responsible "employees" also take advantage of this provision, probably in compensation for the energy they expend in administrating the workers.

Before the era of the five-year plans, the two weeks' vacation actually amounted to the addition of about 4% to the worker's wages, the real value of which was much higher than today. At the present time, the State-employer compensates itself quite liberally for this 4% with the 10% represented by the "loan," a tribute it has been taking out of the workers' pay for years. The lower paid workers and clerks (who form the base of the system) suffer so much from this situation that it is often necessary to *force* them to take their vacations. The constant half-poverty that the worker who is the father of a family finds himself in, often brings him to *implore* his bosses for the permission to work during his vacation, so that he may double his pay at least during two weeks in the year. But the law is rigorous and such

a favor is granted very rarely. Let not the reader play with the idea of the possibility of hoarding or personal economy on the part of the worker, so common in France. The Russian detests the woolen sock; the constant devaluation of the rouble makes saving quite ineffectual.

For 56 days before and 56 days after childbirth the working woman has a right to a paid rest if her employment is not sedentary—this qualification applies whether she is a worker, engineer or actress. In the other cases, she is entitled to 42 days after and before childbirth. Everybody will appreciate the importance and necessity of such a rest in a situation where the man's wages are no longer sufficient to support the family, so that 40% of the workers are women. And these women workers must do their housework besides laboring in the factory.

Putting aside the small indemnities that are allowed in cases of birth or death, we shall pass on to the topic of retirement pensions.

In principle, the worker has the right to a pension as soon as he is no longer in the condition to work. In practice, the worker labors till his last ounce of strength, even to the age of seventy. A worker living in a great poverty on a wage of 100 roubles or so a month is evidently in no hurry to retire on a pension of 25 or 50 roubles—when rye bread costs 0.85 roubles a kilo and wheat bread 1.70 roubles a kilo. We know old fellows, who have labored *fifty* years in the same factory in Moscow and now get 35 roubles as a retirement pension—that is, the price of two kilos of butter. At the age of 75 the human animal needs little; yet it is hard to buy yourself even your daily bread without having to sell some mushrooms, nuts or berries that you go out to pick in the woods outside the city. And you must have the strength to do that.

Retired workers are no longer serviceable in the conquest of a superior technique or the establishment of industry on a grandiose scale. Retired workers are not vigorous enough to dare to protest their needs. Since the general lack of things has deadened the sentiment of humanity, the retired workers are perhaps the real pariahs in the Soviet régime. (Let us not forget the extremely low wages they got when they were working. Let us not forget that continuous inflation has not permitted them to put aside a single kopek for their old age.)

In such matters as pension and retirement the bureaucracy is most exacting and offers all sorts of complications. The timid worker in quest of retirement drags his weary feet from cage-window to cage-window, earning his alms of a pension all over again. There is even a vast *Institute for Scientific Research and Evaluation of Invalidity*, the function of which it is to contest every pension claimed by invalid workers. The *Institute* declared in *Izvestia*, September 17, 1934:

"Four years of experience have shown us that nearly all invalids are capable of working and we occupy ourselves specially with the task of bringing them back to work . . . Science gives the word (invalidity) an entirely relative significance and permits us to return to production a great number of our invalids . . ."

That is, in accordance with the needs of its' budget, the State sets "science" to work to diminish and void the allowances granted to pensioned invalids. No law or Parliament is needed here. "Science" in the service of the State-employer is sufficient for the job.

In 1933 we heard the spokesmen of the State trade-unions answer retired aged workers who in the utmost of misery begged for the favor of being allowed to buy their food in the—then cheaper—lunchroom of the same factory to which they have given the best of their life:

"If you want to improve your condition, comrades, come back



to the shop. We shall find you some light tasks. Otherwise, it is impossible to permit you to buy your meals in the lunchroom. You know it is only for those who work!"

And that was true. The trade-union committee of the factory could not accord such a "favor," for the factory lunchroom was furnished as many portions of food as there were workers active in the shop.

The worker's pension varies from 25 to 50 roubles a month, rarely more. A few old super-oudarniks may attain 70-80 roubles. The worker's pension is personal. It deprives the worker of the right to eat in the factory lunchroom, but does not free him from the necessity of paying for his lodging. It is granted to the worker himself. On the other hand, with a simple stroke of the pen, the higher representatives of the State will give to the widows and children of the eminent personalities of the régime (Party officials, administrators, technicians, professors, etc. . . ) pensions from 250 to 1,000 roubles and more a month, besides other very advantageous privileges, as that of enjoying an apartment or a villa, allowed for life to the family of the "notable" of the "socialist" State. On the other side of the barricade, the widow and children of the worker have the privilege of going to the factory or the settlements run by the "Public Aid."

This explains the employment of the first two billions of the budget for "Social Security." Let us pass on to the remaining billions.

II.—What strikes one immediately upon considering the use to which the other two billions are applied is that they are put to purposes that may be very useful but which up to now no society, not even capitalist society, has had the gall to qualify as "Social Security" or an "addition to the wages."

Houses are constructed that are often occupied by the privileged section of Soviet society and where *rent is paid* as elsewhere, and that is called *social security*! More: the construction and upkeep of public parks—baptised for the occasion "gardens of culture and rest"—and athletic stadiums, where you must pay to enter, are also described as an addition to the "socialist" wages!

And what shall we say of "cultural work" that consists in propagating the last decree of the authorities in so-called "workers'" clubs, where nobody has the right to express an opinion that in any way deviates from the official orthodoxy of the moment?

That is perhaps security against "heresy" but not "social security."

The nursery schools are called "children's gardens," though the garden is usually missing and the recreation yards are not even expected to be there. All mothers, except the very poor, have to pay for the chance of leaving their children in the Soviet nursery schools. Yet the State-employer has the gall of putting the upkeep of these nursery schools under the heading of "social security." We find under the same heading the upkeep of institutions for foundlings, orphans, and the "creches," where the mother of the *poor family*—and only the poor mother—leaves her infant during her hours of work in the factory.

In the USSR, more than elsewhere, the worker's wife is obliged by want to follow her husband into the factory. It is just a bit cruel to describe as "emancipation" the need of a mother of a worker family to do piece work or to labor at the belt during the nursing of her baby.

A part of the budget for public education is also covered by "social security." Education—even elementary schooling—is, in fact, free only in a very relative sense. Parents have to pay for pupils' books and stationery. And because the books that were thus bought by the pupils' parents became, at the end of the

school year, the "socialist" property of the school, no less than a special decree, signed by Stalin on August 7, 1935, was necessary to make the books thus bought, the legal property of the persons who paid for them. From the *Izvestia* of August 8, 1935, we learn that the State did a fine business in the sale of books. In the elementary schools, for example, the rate paid for books was 5 roubles per pupil, who received for his money only 3 roubles' worth of books. In the Moscow secondary schools pupils pay 24 roubles and more a year. In spite of that, there is often one book for 3 to 5 pupils (the same *Izvestia*). Yet under Tsarism books and stationery were free in the primary schools.

Included in the section of expenses for "social security" are scholarships, which, as we know, are far from being distributed equally and benefit finally only a very small part of the population, the elements destined to fill the big positions.

No, it is quite clear that the second third of the budget for "social security" cannot be recognized as a real "salary supplement," unless we adopt the same stand toward similar swindles perpetrated elsewhere.

III.—The condition of public health in the USSR is deplorable. According to the *Izvestia* of February 6, 1936, the Commissar of Public Health of the Pan-Russian Republic of Soviets, Kaminski, declared that in the hospitals of Moscow—which is in a favorable situation—there were only 6.3 beds for every thousand inhabitants, while in 1913 there were 7.4. "For children," he said, "matters are even worse. Only 3% of the beds needed can be provided for the children."

We again quote the *Izvestia* (February 28, 1936): "... though there are in the USSR more than 300,000 children suffering from rickets, paralysis and similar defects, there is no institution to take care of them. In Moscow in particular the existence of 5,000 of such children is officially acknowledged. Yet only 65 beds are devoted to them and there is no special establishment for such cases. . . ."

In spite of these facts, the State-employer does not hesitate to describe such misery as a "salary supplement."

Yes, the Soviet recipient of "social security" and his family have a right to free hospitalization and medical care. But there are rights and rights. The "notables" of the Soviet regime also have a right to free hospitalization and medical care. They get this convenience in the incomparable establishments found within the Kremlin area. In those hospitals the patient receives the utmost of attention and comfort. There it is useless to want to choose your doctors, because you find gathered in one place the greatest exponents of the medical and surgical art in the country. The poor devil of a worker, on the other hand, gets the medical attention and hospitalization that poor people everywhere receive in the crowded infirmaries destined for them. Lying in his hospital, the Soviet worker keeps up his strength with the *wheat bread* that friends and relatives bring him from outside.

We can guess here the reason why the Soviet authorities hide so assiduously the part of the public-health and "social security" budgets devoted to the care of the "notables" of the régime. The figures for the entire population are put under the same heading. So that at first sight it appears that we are dealing here with a society that has never been approximated for unity and equality of opportunity. In reality, however, the medical services, said to be supported by the entire "socialist community," are very unequally distributed, always in favor of the citizen with the "function,"—an arrangement that has seemingly replaced private property as a means of social and material advantage.

A half-billion roubles is applied to the construction and upkeep of houses of rest, sanatoriums, "Rivieras" and sea-side resorts.



All these establishments have the following features in common. They are more comfortable, more private, more peaceful, the higher is the "social function" of the people for whom they are destined. Indeed, all Soviet vacationers breathe the same air. They tan themselves under the same sun and bathe in the same Black Sea. But that is only because science and technology have not yet succeeded in partitioning the air, the sun and the Black Sea. Excepting for that unavoidable characteristic, one kind of vacation place is different from the other kind in every way imaginable: food, comfort, insistence on "discipline," service, privacy, etc.

In Crimea, on the Russian Riviera, you will find "Livadia," an old residence of the Tsar. It has been transformed into a house of rest for the people. What a fine symbol! But what do we find in reality? The rooms have become dormitories, mess halls, "big-house" exercise yards. The place has been turned into "barracks of rest" for the common folk. Going to that institution with your family is out of question; you cannot even choose your cot neighbor in those dormitories, each of which holds 30 to 40 sleepers. You dare not tarry too long on the beach or in the surrounding woods, for fear of losing your meal or being disciplined. And there is your obligation to follow with regularity the political courses and the artistical-educative exercises that will endow your body with a perfectly policed mind. Professional hygienists and sociologists have devised a special "material" and "intellectual" regimen for the poor Soviet folk who come to these places in the quest of rest from work.

What this regimen amounts to we can judge by the following excerpts from an explanatory pamphlet issued in 1934 by the Soviet trade-unions<sup>3</sup>:

(page 39):  
*... the scientific study of the repose of workers is the study of the influence of "organized" rest on the restoration of the forces and the increase of the productivity of the workers' labor. Such a study is of great importance in the rationalization of the worker's rest ...*  
 (page 12):

*Every system of worker rest in the USSR serves directly the ends of socialist construction, of the increase of the productivity of the workers' labor and the health of the working class.*  
 (page 40):

*The studies carried on by the "Institute of Hygiene and Labor Pathology" in Odessa have shown that the repose of our socialist worker ought not to be the old "rest after labor" but should be transformed into "rest for labor," rest for the raising of the worker's productivity. For that, purpose, the most adequate, the most rational forms must be found in all spheres.*

What is the meaning of this conception of rest "for" labor instead of rest "after" labor?  
 (page 12):

*The repose of our Soviet worker should consist of a careful synthesis allying the recuperation of strength and energy to cultural and political development. The physical culture exercises of those who rest should prepare them to pass successfully the test of "Ready for Labor and Defence." Special days of political education, as well as military marches, should be organized ... All of this forms a solid basis permitting us to destroy for ever the extremely harmful prejudice, inherited from the bourgeoisie, that repose is not only "doing nothing," that is not work, but also something opposed to work.*

The "naive" worker dreamt of liberating Labor. His guard-

ians raise for him the monster idol of holy Labor, which crushes him even during his repose. What previous society has dared to form such a conception?

The "Ready for Labor and Defence" is an insignia of military preparation accorded to men and women citizens who have passed certain athletic and shooting tests. This is forced on the workers during their vacations, when they have no "political days" and military marches. The workers must not be let alone. They must not be left time to think. An idling mind is dangerous. In the name and with the aid of science, the mind of the vacationing worker must be occupied.

But that applies only to workers. Not everybody in the USSR needs the same protection. Only a few kilometers from "Livadia," you can see with what disdain this "science of rest," wished on the common population, is treated by the Soviet notables. There each customer has his own large room. His little pavillion opens into the park. There the bill of fare is varied and subtle. There you have soft-stepping servants. No vacationing in soul-forming factories for the worthies who manufacture the souls of others! They can idle as long as they want to on the restricted beaches or in the special parks protected from intruders by long walls. They get everything that is worth while in a so-called "bourgeois" vacation.

The "Livadia" of the common folk is the best institution of its kind. Yet you could not think of anything worse than the common people's halls of repose where, besides discipline, poverty, cockroaches and bed bugs hold sway. Because the "free" vacations in the village are full of nearly insurmountable difficulties—the peasant selling very dear the little produce that the State leaves him—the city worker has no choice but to solicit for himself a place in the "barracks for workers' repose." For the sake of a bit of fresh air, you must learn to bear it.

Let us see now how this "organized" rest is distributed to the workers and how many get it.

In the first place, it is not free to all. Some pay absolutely nothing. Some pay half of the transportation. Others pay all of the transportation. Others pay for a part of the stay at the vacation resorts. Still others for all of it. How much the worker has to pay for his vacation and how much of it he gets free has no connection with his income. It depends only on his utility to the régime, on how much "pull" he can dispose and, to some extent, on luck.

Every year, through the intermediary of the trade-unions, the factory receives a definite number of "permissions to rest" (free, partly free and paying) to be distributed among the workers.

On page 22 of the pamphlet quoted above we find details telling how these chances of a vacation are distributed:

*The trade-union officials of the Poutilov factory<sup>4</sup> give their opinion of a candidate (for a vacation) only after having examined minutely how he filled the norms of productivity, what was the quality of his work and what of his social activity? Was he the best oudarnik? ...*

*As can be seen, at the Poutilov factory we have taken the best way of choosing those who have a right to houses of rest, sanatoriums, beaches and sea-side resorts ...*

Everybody has the right to declare his candidacy for a vacation, but whether you are chosen depends to a very small extent on your state of health. If you are not a "notable," be at least a "super-oudarnik," and you will have some chance of success.

To learn the number of lucky candidates to a vacation, we

<sup>3</sup>Rest for Workers, with the sub-title: "The Task of the Trade Unions in Social Security."

<sup>4</sup>The large Leningrad factory, employing 30 to 40 thousand metal workers.



shall examine the official statistics. They show the following proportions for 1932<sup>5</sup>:

	Beaches and sea-side re- sorts	Sanatoriums
Mine workers . . . . .	1 for 200	1 for 60
Textile . . . . .	1 for 435	1 for 140
Education . . . . .	1 for 1400	1 for 290
Clerks . . . . .	1 for 1660	1 for 500

For heavy industry (including the mines) in 1934, Shchvernink, the secretary-general of the Central Committee of the trade-unions, gave:

1 for 380                      1 for 114

The general figures for all workers (excluding peasants) tell of 1 for every 500 taking advantage of beaches and sea-side resorts; 1 for every 140 going to sanatoriums; 1 for every 20 going to houses of rest, which are for the most part, the barracks of rest found in the immediate vicinity of the cities.

According to the *Izvestia* of 1-2-35, the total figures for 1934 hardly exceeded the 1932 figures, while the worker population had greatly increased in that time. There is therefore no change for the better in the proportions given above.

The official statement calls for the following remarks:

1. The members of the family are not included, and if we multiply by three the number of wage workers, in order to get the number of inhabitants, we find that in a city of 3 millions, as Moscow, about 2,000 have enjoyed, free of charge or with part payment, the beaches and sea-side resorts, 7,000 the sanatoriums and 50,000 the neighborhood rest homes. (In reality, the figures for Moscow are much higher, to the disadvantage of the provinces, as there are many more notables in Moscow.) The vacation camps for school children have to be paid for by the children's parents. Bringing into our calculation the number of children at such camps would not change the order of our figures, since the coefficient 3 that we have used is a minimum for USSR.

2. Under the name "worker" are included, in mine and factory, workers as well as their bosses, technicians and office managers. A simple visit to the sea-side resorts, beaches and rest houses will show the following. The more "comfortable" is the rest offered at a place, the greater the proportion of the responsables and technicians vacationing there. We find ourselves starting with the zero of comfort in the rest barracks of the third order (which are the appanage of the steady workers at the base of the system and the super-oudarniks). We reach 100% of comfort in the fashionable beaches of and sea-side resorts monopolized by the higher-ups.

3. The figures given above do not indicate to what extent the "free" vacations are partly paid for.

In other words, the Soviet "salary supplement," glorified by some people in the West, is an enormous bluff. The 30% of the wages that it should constitute is reduced to some 6-7%, unequally distributed, and the evolution of the "salary supplement" indicates clearly that its value decreases alongside the real wages. The heading "Pensions and Various Indemnities" represented only two-thirds of the budget for "Social Security" in 1929. Today it represents only a third. The rates of sickness benefit and accident benefit have been reduced. Pensions have undergone a radical revision downward. At the same time new

direct taxes (10% of the wage) have been laid on the population.

The "salary supplement" contributes to implant a new illusion in the mind of the people: everybody *possesses* the common property, but each *enjoys* it unequally. In fact, the big functionary finds himself in a situation where in the name of workers' security, he does not even need to economize for the future. The new society guarantees him his material privileges for life.

The "social securities" are favors that the all-powerful State-employer grants or *does not grant*. They are alms thrown to the pariahs it exploits.

And since the new Moloch is much more exacting than the old, the State-employer wills to have everything utilized "rationally." Even repose distributed so meagerly among the workers, is transformed, in the name of science, into a system of political education, into exercises for the increase of productivity and preparation for military service.

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<sup>5</sup>A pamphlet issued by the trade-unions in 1933: *The Standard of Living of the Soviet Workers Rises*, page 64.